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1991

# BUILDING A LEGACY

*The Land and Water Conservation Fund*



07 DEC 1991

CELEBRATING OVER A QUARTER  
CENTURY OF PROVIDING A  
LEGACY OF SCENIC WONDERS,  
RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES,  
AND HABITAT PROTECTION

United States  
Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service FS-489  
September 1991



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture



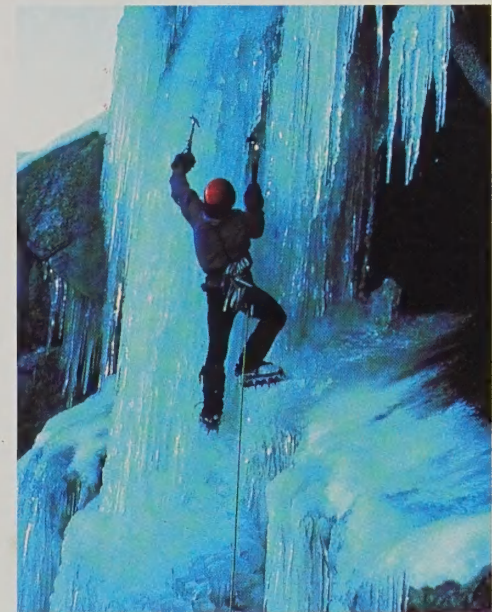
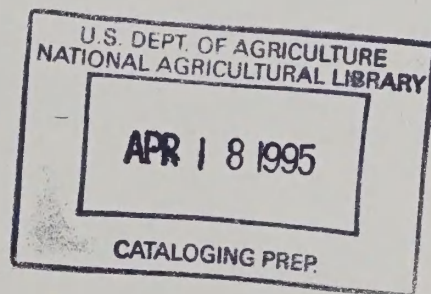
**National Agricultural Library**



**T**he national forests are a legacy that we leave for future generations—and when you look at them, you can't help but be impressed by what a vast and wonderful legacy they make! There are over 191 million acres in the National Forest System—156 national forests, 19 national grasslands, and 21 research and experimental areas—located in 42 States plus Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. National Forest System lands are richly varied; there are majestic forests, wild rivers, high mountains, fertile wetlands, vast watersheds, stark deserts, prairies and grasslands, rain-forests, and swamps, all important for both their beauty and their ecological value.

National Forest System lands are important for outdoor recreation as well. Over 253 million visitor-days were tallied on NFS lands in 1989. Visitors can ski, hike, drive for pleasure, hunt, photograph wildlife, fish, windsurf, canoe, kayak, mountainbike, rockclimb, camp, and ride horses, to name just a few of the recreation activities that are possible in the National Forest System.

Land and Water Conservation Fund acquisitions help build this legacy by adding to wilderness areas, special habitats, and recreation areas. The fund, in its first 25 years, has provided more than 7.3 billion dollars to the Federal land managing agencies and State and local governments for the purchase of some 5.5 million acres. Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars are used to buy lands for recreation; purchase inholdings in wilderness areas; protect scenic wonders and archeological sites; and protect habitats, sensitive ecosystems, wetlands and watersheds, migration corridors, and plant and animal reintroduction efforts.



**CELEBRATING OVER A QUARTER CENTURY OF PROVIDING A  
LEGACY OF SCENIC WONDERS, RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES,  
AND HABITAT PROTECTION**







### *WHAT IS THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND?*

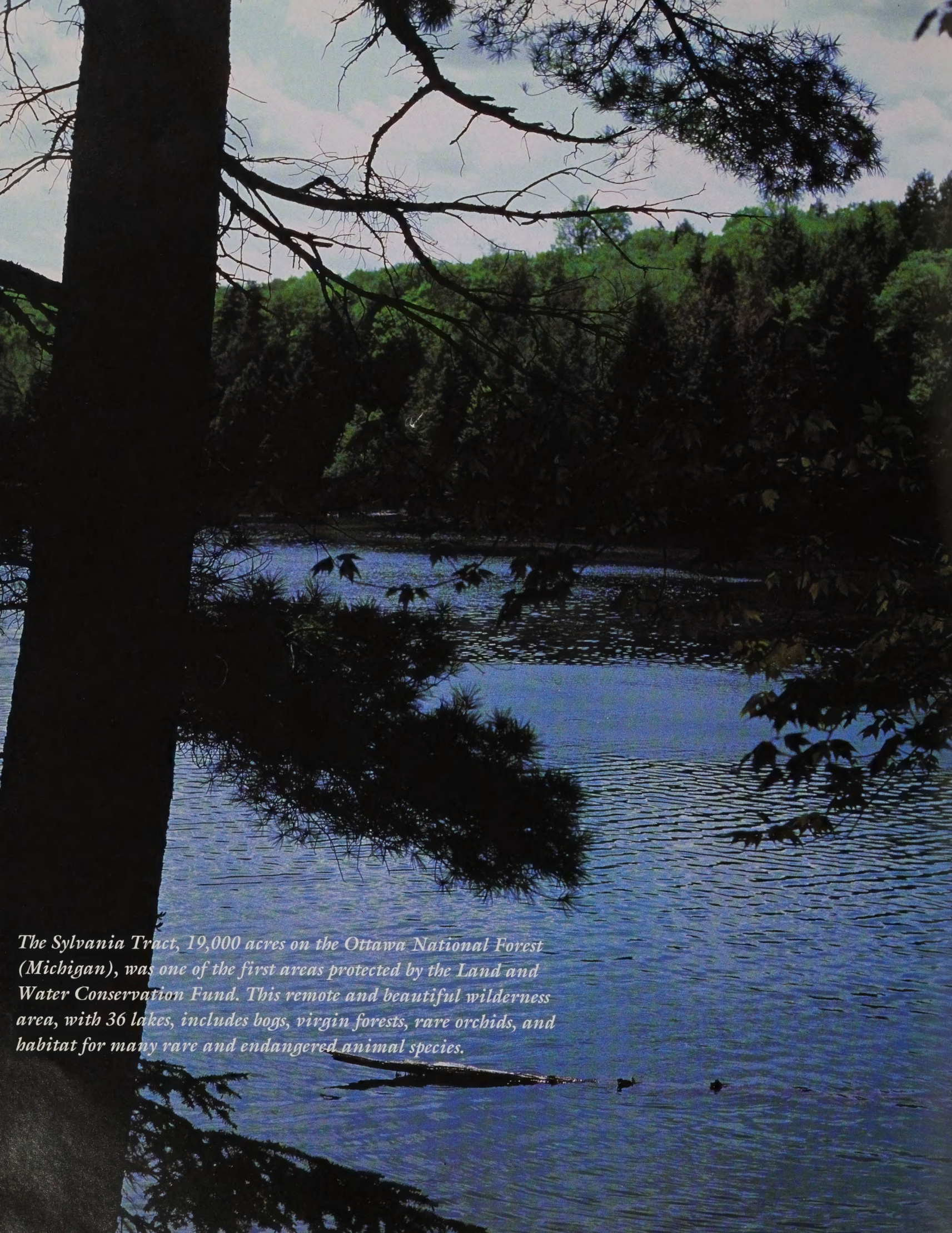
The Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF), established September 3, 1964 as Public Law 88-578, provides for the acquisition and protection of natural resource lands by Federal, State, and local governments. Funds derived from the sale of surplus Federal real estate, a portion of Federal taxes on motorboat fuel, Outer Continental Shelf revenues derived from leasing of oil and gas sites in coastal waters, and entry fees at selected Federal recreation areas are reinvested in Federal land purchases. Thus, revenues from the production and use of non-renewable resources are converted into an enduring legacy for future generations. The L&WCF Act was extended through 2015 by the 1988 Budget Reconciliation Act (P.L. 100-203).

*Silver Glen's first-magnitude, crystal-clear springs provide 72 million gallons of water per day to Lake George. The springs, on the Ocala National Forest (Florida), are important habitat for manatees, bald eagles, and ospreys and are a popular recreation stop for boaters traveling the Intercoastal Waterway.*

*Linking the Osceola National Forest to the Okefenokee Swamp, an important alligator habitat, Pinhook Swamp provides a migratory pathway for black bear, bobcat, and Florida panther.*







*The Sylvania Tract, 19,000 acres on the Ottawa National Forest (Michigan), was one of the first areas protected by the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This remote and beautiful wilderness area, with 36 lakes, includes bogs, virgin forests, rare orchids, and habitat for many rare and endangered animal species.*



### **DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM**

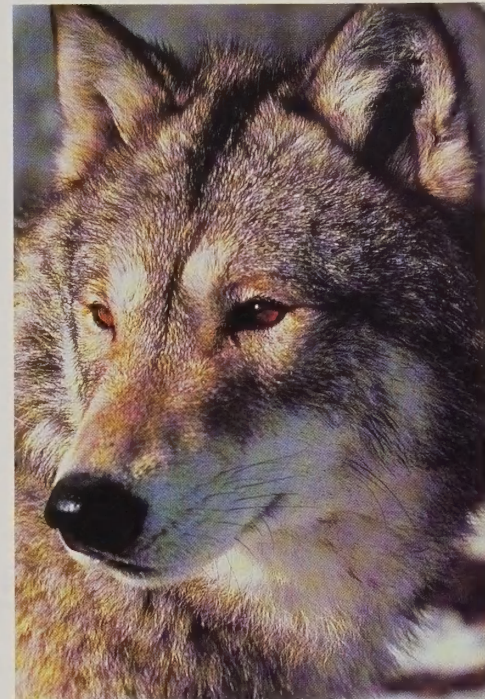
The Forest Reserve Act of 1891 made possible the establishment of forest reserves (called national forests after 1907) from Federal lands that had not been previously conveyed from the public domain into State or private ownership. President Theodore Roosevelt, working with Gifford Pinchot, first Chief of the Forest Service, designated 141,267,530 acres of public domain lands for forest reserves during his administration (1901 to 1909). Because most of the land in the public domain remained west of the Rocky Mountains at that time, few of the forest reserves were located in the East. Although many of these designated lands are vast and full of many resources, often they were what was left over after nearly a century of disposing of public land. For example, in the Southwest and the intermountain region, riparian areas and water sources inside national forest boundaries are often in private ownership. In some wilderness areas, intermingled ownership patterns and changing land uses can threaten the most significant values of the surrounding national forest lands.

On March 1, 1911, President William Howard Taft approved the Weeks Act, which made possible the establishment of national forests through the purchase of forest lands. Under the Weeks Act, purchase units for the acquisition of lands for national

forest were established, primarily on areas not suited for agriculture, in many Eastern and Midwestern States. Land acquisition under this law peaked during the years just before World War II, with the purchase of tracts often consisting of cutover timber lands or worn-out hill farms. Here again, most of these lands were the lands nobody wanted, and national forests in the East and South are often patchworks of private and National Forest System lands. Careful protection and management have restored these abused lands.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act "to assist in preserving, developing and assuring accessibility to all citizens of the United States of America of present and future generations...such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation."

The National Forest System now comprises over 191 million acres, with 166,793,076 acres in the western regions and 24,475,193 acres in the eastern regions. Land and Water Conservation Fund acquisitions, however, have been concentrated in the Eastern United States, as required by the act.







Columbia River Gorge  
National Scenic Area



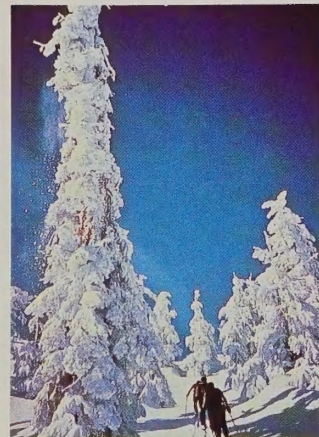
Northern  
Yellowstone Elkherd  
Gallatin NF



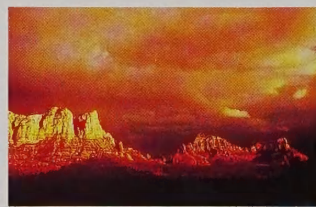
Hope Valley  
Toiyabe NF



Hathaway Ranch  
Los Padres NF



Pacific Crest  
National Scenic Trail



Oak Creek Canyon  
Coconino NF



Castle Creek  
White River NF





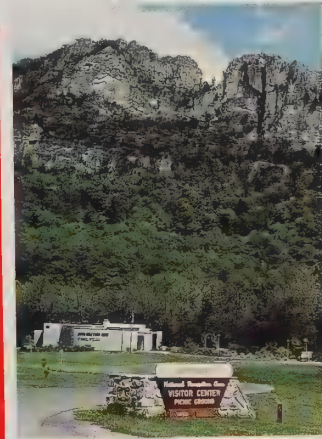
Boundary Waters  
Canoe Area Wilderness



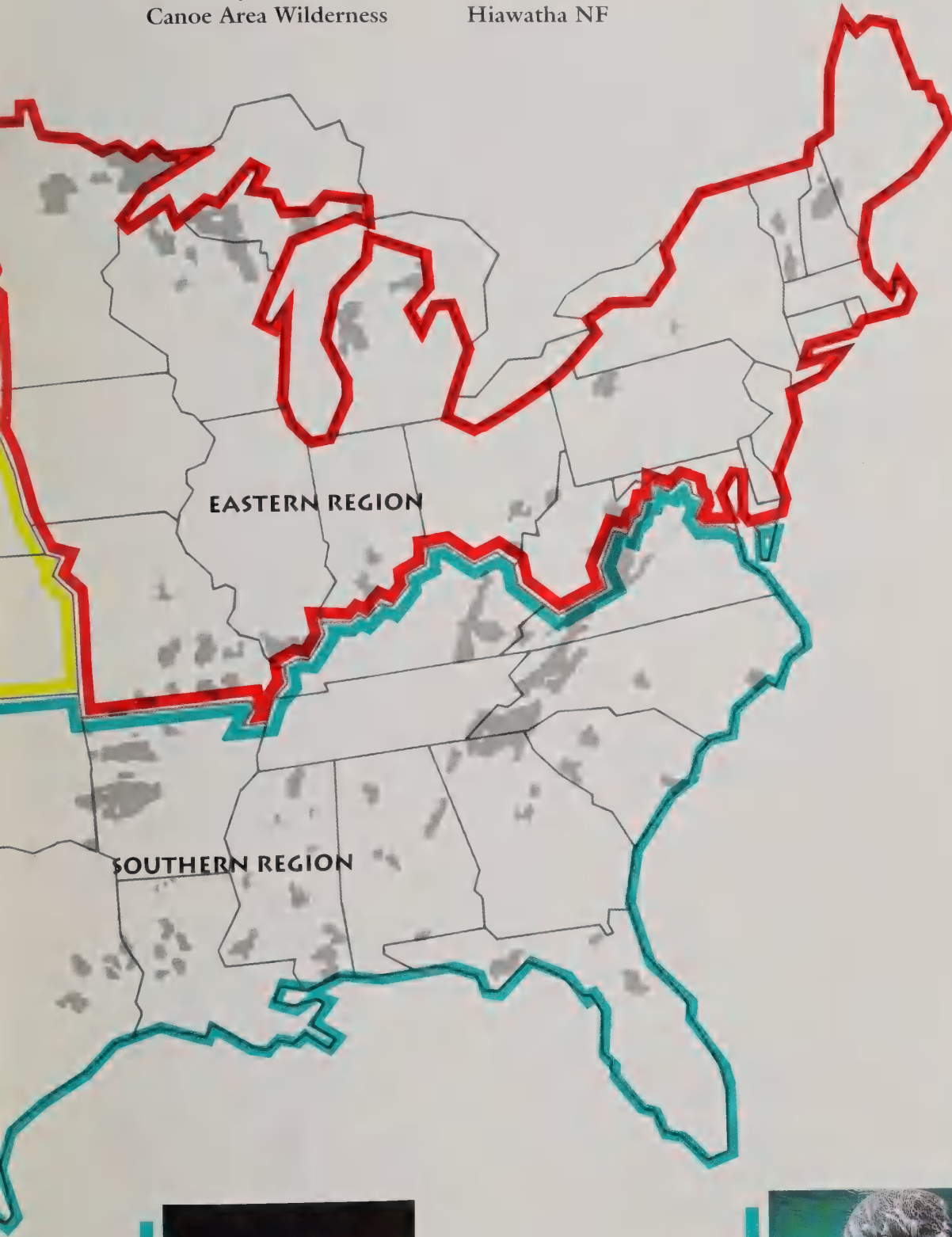
Grand Island NRA  
Hiawatha NF



White River  
Green Mountain NF



Seneca Rocks  
Monongahela NF



EASTERN REGION

SOUTHERN REGION



Appalachian National  
Scenic Trail



Blanchard Springs Caverns  
Ozark-St. Francis NF



Ocala NF



Chattooga River  
Sumter NF



# BUILDING A LEGACY

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Although the initial focus of the L&WCF was outdoor recreation, it has become the primary source of funds for natural resource protection. The first 25 years of the L&WCF program have seen significant accomplishments in land acquisition: Nearly 1.4 million acres have been acquired within the National Forest System. Although these lands represent less than 1 percent of all National Forest System lands, their scenic, environmental, and recreational quality and value are highly significant. L&WCF acquisitions have included something for every one:

- Streams
- Beaches
- Wilderness areas
- Wild and scenic rivers
- National recreation areas
- Outstanding geological and scenic areas
- Scenic research areas
- National Recreation Trails System
- Historic properties
- Endangered species habitat

Land and Water Conservation Fund acquisitions have also included:

- Scenic easements
- Outstanding recreation lands
- Important developed recreation sites



*White Rocks National  
Recreation Area,  
Green Mountain National Forest  
(Vermont)*

*The Oregon Dunes offer some of the most spectacular sand dunes in the United States, exciting all-terrain vehicle areas, and estuaries, lakes, and forests that are habitats for threatened and endangered animal and plant species (Siuslaw National Forest).*





*The Horse Pasture River,  
Nantahala National Forest  
(North Carolina).*



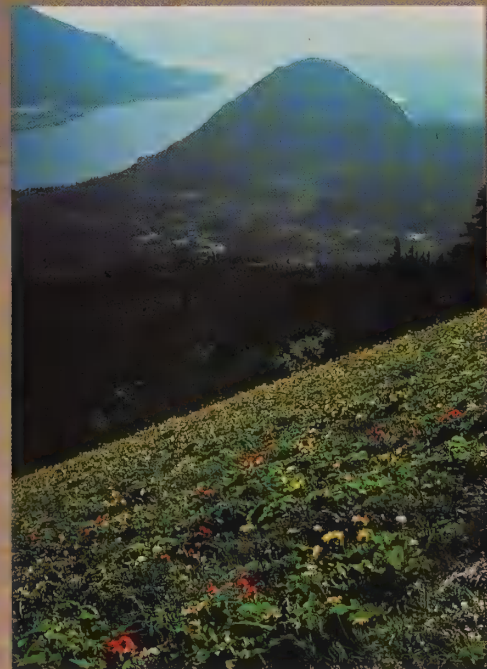
*Blanchard Springs Caverns,  
Ozark-St. Francis National Forest  
(Arkansas).*



*Indian pictographs,  
Salmon National Forest  
(Idaho).*



*Easements protect the scenery  
along the Columbia River Gorge,  
The Columbia River National Scenic  
Area (Oregon and Washington).*







### *HOW THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND WORKS*

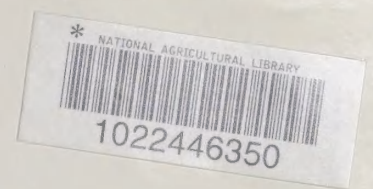
Four Government agencies—the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, and the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Fish and Wildlife Service—prioritize specific potential purchases and forward a joint list to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The OMB then sets a limit on the total acquisition funds and forwards the President's list to the Congress, which makes the final decision on which lands to purchase. Conservation organizations are called upon to testify at budget hearings about the desirability and value of specific tracts of land. Generally, the Congress appropriates money for the Land and Water Conservation Fund program based on the President's list and suggestions from the conservation organizations. In the 25-year history of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, an average of 31 million has been spent annually for lands added to the National Forest System.

Only certain properties qualify for purchase by the L&WCF: The lands should lie within the boundaries of or be adjacent to an existing Federal conservation or recreation unit, or be the initial building block of one; the lands should present no known health, safety, or liability problems and the owners should be willing to sell; and the costs of making the purchase

accessible, safe, and usable by the public should not exceed 10 percent of the purchase price.

Projects are ranked by a number of criteria: threat by development; number of recreation opportunities provided; plant and animal habitat protection; cultural resource protection; protection of wetlands and riparian areas; accessibility for the elderly and handicapped; rapidly increasing use by the public and proximity to population centers; and improved manageability and efficiency.





## TEAMWORK HELPS

These examples of L&WCF accomplishments illustrate the wide diversity of landscapes and recreation experiences for which the fund is used. Organizations, companies, and individuals have worked with the Forest Service in acquiring important lands for outdoor recreation needs. These partners have helped in many ways—some in buying and making available key tracts that otherwise would have been lost before public funds could be obtained, some in making bargain sales or donations of lands needed for public recreation, some in raising public support for tracts needed to protect threatened or endangered species of plants or animals, some in facilitating complicated negotiations, and all in their donation of time and energy to provide more opportunities for outdoor recreation on the national forests.

Much of the success of the L&WCF program is due to these partners. The Forest Service and generations of Americans are greatly indebted to organizations such as the Appalachian Trail Conference, The Nature Conservancy, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and the Trust for Public Land for their contribution to the welfare of the Nation. Local chapters of these and other national groups, State and local organizations and governments, and dedicated individuals all have proved to be valuable partners of the L&WCF.

While we celebrate these and all of the L&WCF successes of the past 25 years, we continue to look to present and future needs and dedicate our continuing efforts to building future success on the foundations that we have already laid. Hundreds of tracts of land containing thousands of acres needed for outdoor recreation and natural resource protection are available for L&WCF acquisition every year, but only a small percentage can be acquired.

As our population and need for outdoor recreational opportunities and resource protection grow, competing land uses continue to take up more of the lands best suited to providing these needs. In the future, there will be fewer suitable tracts of lands available, many unique tracts will have been altered beyond repair, and the costs of lands that are still available will continue to increase. Lands to provide outdoor recreational opportunities and natural resource protection need to be acquired as soon as possible to minimize both costs and inconsistent use.







### THE LEGACY AND YOU

*The people of the Forest Service strive to care for the Nation's forests and rangelands, serve the needs of the people who own them, and thus strengthen the Nation for future generations. We are responsible for the conservation and wise use of the Nation's forests and rangelands through our management of the national forests and grasslands, cooperation with the States to help private landowners apply good forest practices on their lands, and research to find better ways to manage and protect our natural resources. But we need your help.*

*There is a national forest well within a day's drive of most Americans, and more people recreate on national forests than anywhere else. However, few national forests have realized their potential. You can contribute to the legacy that is America's national forests. You, your organization, or your company could be a partner in providing recreation opportunities and natural resource protection for present and future generations. You can help in protecting wetlands or a unique plant or animal species on a national forest near you. You could be instrumental in the acquisition of lands providing recreation opportunities for you and your neighbors, both young and old. You can be part of building and ensuring the legacy for the future.*

*If you can donate time, contribute funds, or have ideas, products, or services that can help in this effort, come join our team! You can help us improve the recreational opportunities and conservation of your national forests by supporting L&WCF projects. Your commitment now will make a difference for years to come.*

*Find out what you can do for your national forests—call or write the regional field office nearest you.*



**Northern Region (R-1)**

Federal Building  
PO Box 7669  
Missoula, MT 59807  
Tel: (406) 329-3511

**Rocky Mountain Region (R-2)**

11177 West 8th Avenue  
PO Box 25127  
Lakewood, CO 80225  
Tel: (303) 236-9660

**Southwestern Region (R-3)**

Federal Building  
517 Gold Avenue SW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Tel: (505) 842-3292

**Intermountain Region (R-4)**

Federal Building  
324 25th Street  
Ogden, UT 84401  
Tel: (801) 625-5164

**Pacific Southwest Region (R-5)**

630 Sansome Street  
San Francisco, CA 94111  
Tel: (415) 705-2744

**Pacific Northwest Region (R-6)**

PO Box 3623  
Portland, OR 97208  
Tel: (503) 326-2921

**Southern Region (R-8)**

1720 Peachtree Road,  
Atlanta, GA 30367  
Tel: (404) 347-2686

**Eastern Region (R-9)**

310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Rm 500  
Milwaukee, WI, 53203  
Tel: (414) 291-1901

**Alaska Region (R-10)**

PO Box 21628  
Juneau, AK 99802  
Tel: (907) 871-7872

**USDA Forest Service  
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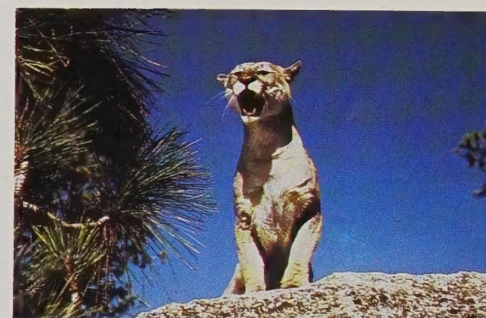
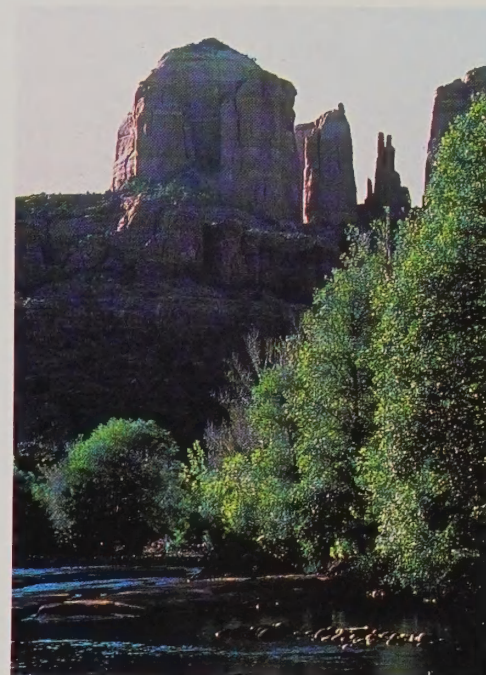
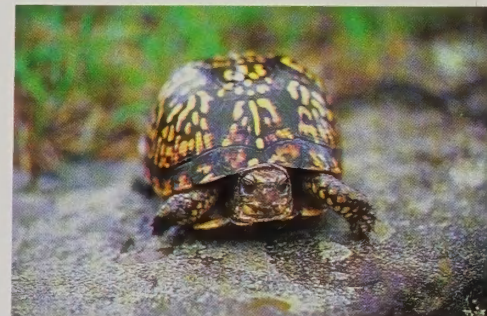


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